

MAR 08 2019

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STRONGLY URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND
THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FEDERAL
AID AND SUPPORT TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FOR FINANCIAL,
MEDICAL, AND OTHER FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR MIGRANTS COVERED
BY THE COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION.

1 WHEREAS, the United States entered into a Compact of Free
2 Association (COFA) with the Federated States of Micronesia, the
3 Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau in
4 1983, which granted citizens of these nations the ability to
5 freely enter the United States and have access to domestic
6 social welfare programs; and
7

8 WHEREAS, under this Compact, COFA migrants are allowed to
9 freely enter the State of Hawaii and are granted access to
10 certain state services, such as education and health care; and
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12 WHEREAS, the United States Congress passed the Personal
13 Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996
14 (PRWORA), that makes needy persons from COFA nations ineligible
15 from receiving federally funded financial and medical
16 assistance; and
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18 WHEREAS, when the PRWORA went into effect in 1997, Hawaii
19 continued to provide equivalent services for COFA migrants using
20 State funds; and
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22 WHEREAS, the cost to the State to provide various services
23 to COFA migrants continues to increase every year and strains
24 the State's resources; and
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26 WHEREAS, in 2014, it was estimated that the State spent
27 \$163 million on COFA migrants, and of that amount, 53 percent



1 was spent on education and 44 percent was spent on health and
2 social services; and
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4 WHEREAS, in 2017, Hawaii spent between \$30 and \$40 million
5 on healthcare costs alone, more than twice the approximately \$12
6 million the State receives in federal Compact Impact Assistance
7 funding; and
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9 WHEREAS, if the PRWORA is amended to allow COFA migrants to
10 receive federally funded financial and medical assistance, the
11 State would not have to expend state funds to provide the
12 equivalent services, thus allowing more of the State's general
13 funds to be used for services and programs for which federal
14 funding is not available; and
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16 WHEREAS, in addition to amending the PRWORA, the State
17 would likely see a decrease in cost if the United States
18 government provided much needed dialysis and chemotherapy
19 centers in Micronesia and all areas covered by the Compact; and
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21 WHEREAS, the United States government must address the
22 issue of additional federal support for the State to continue
23 providing state services to COFA migrants arising from the
24 unique federally created relationship between the United States
25 and the COFA nations; now, therefore,
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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
28 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the House of
29 Representatives concurring, that the United States Department of
30 the Interior and the Congress of the United States are strongly
31 urged to provide additional federal aid and support to the State
32 of Hawaii for financial, medical, and other federal assistance
33 for the migrants covered by the Compact of Free Association; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
36 the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs, is strongly urged to
37 review the funding of the Compact Impact Assistance grant and to
38 make every effort to increase the amount of direct assistance
39 available to Hawaii to offset costs incurred by the State; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Congress is
 2 strongly urged to support federal legislation to amend the
 3 PRWORA to render COFA migrants eligible to receive federally
 4 funded financial and medical assistance; and

5
 6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
 7 the Interior is strongly urged to identify and secure other
 8 forms of direct assistance to the State and COFA population in
 9 the United States, including grants from other sources and
 10 federal programs; and

11
 12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
 13 the Interior is strongly urged to provide dialysis and
 14 chemotherapy centers in Micronesia and in all areas within the
 15 Compact to decrease health care costs in the State; and

16
 17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 18 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
 19 United States, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the
 20 Director of the Office of Insular Affairs, the Majority Leader
 21 of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States
 22 House of Representatives, and the members of Hawaii's
 23 congressional delegation.

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 26 OFFERED BY:

4/ Kabin Egleh

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